

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 03978

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, TW
SUBJECT: ARREST OF CH'EN CHU
REFS: (A) TAIPEI 3972, (B) TAIPEI 3925

1. DURING THE EVENING OF JUNE 23 WE WERE TELEPHONED BY TAIWANESE FRIENDS OF MISS CH'EN CHU AND BY AN AMERICAN PRIEST, FATHER RONALD BOCCIERI, OF LO TSU MISSION IN TU HSIN TOWNSHIP IN CHUANG HUA COUNTY AND INFORMED THAT MISS CH'EN HAD BEEN ARRESTED THAT EVENING AT THE MISSION. MISS CH'EN, A FRIEND OF SOMEONE IN THE MISSION, HAD APPARENTLY SOUGHT REFUGE THERE SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE AND FATHER BOCCIERI TOOK HER IN "AS A GUEST" WITHOUT ASKING ANY QUESTIONS, AS IS THE CUSTOM OF HIS MISSION. DURING THE EVENING MEAL THE POLICE ARRIVED IN FORCE, APPROXIMATELY 30 STRONG, HEADED BY A POLICE OFFICER WHO SAID HE WAS ALSO WITH THE TAIWAN GARRISON COMMAND. WHEN THEY PRODUCED A WARRANT, FATHER BOCCIERI OFFERED THEM HIS COOPERATION. THE POLICE WERE LOUD AND ABUSIVE AND THREATENED TO BREAK DOWN THE DOOR OF THE BUILDING WHERE MISS CH'EN HAD TAKEN REFUGE. FATHER BOCCIERI CONVINCED HER TO COME OUT, AND SHE WAS ROUGHLY HANDLED BY THE POLICE AS THEY TOOK HER OFF. THE POLICE CONTINUED TO INSULT FATHER BOCCIERI AND THE OTHER PERSONS PRESENT.

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2. WE LEARNED OF THE ARREST SHORTLY AFTER IT OCCURRED AND INFORMED CHANG SHIAO-YEN OF MOFA, WHO HAPPENED TO BE AT DINNER AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD INFORM VICE MINISTER FRED CHIEN THAT EVENING AND COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT "WOULD HANDLE THIS CASE MORE WISELY THAN IT HAD

OTHERS IN THE PAST". WE HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD CHANG THAT WHILE WE WERE UNABLE TO COMMENT ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE CHARGES AGAINST MISS CH'EN, HER ARREST WOULD NO DOUBT RESULT IN ADVERSE PUBLICITY IN THE U.S., WHICH COULD ONLY HARM THE REPUTATION OF THE GROC.

3. CHANG HSIAO-YEN INFORMED US ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 24 THAT HE TOLD VICE MINISTER CHIEN OF THE ARREST AT 2200 JUNE 23. CHIEN HAD SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN CONTACTED BY THE GROC AUTHORITIES WHO TOLD HIM THAT THEY HAD NOT YET DECIDED HOW THEY WOULD HANDLE THE CASE; THEY DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY WOULD INDICT AND TRY HER OR WHETHER THEY WOULD MERELY CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION FOLLOWING THE ARREST. THERE WAS THEREFORE "SOME POSSIBILITY" THAT SHE MIGHT BE RELEASED. CHIEN ASKED CHANG TO INFORM US THAT "THE CASE WAS BEING HANDLED VERY CAREFULLY, MUCH MORE CAREFULLY THAN BEFORE". WE BELIEVE OUR CONCERNS WILL BE CONVEYED TO "THE AUTHORITIES" HANDLING THE CASE VIA VICE MINISTER CHIEN.

4. WE SHALL BE FOLLOWING THE REACTIONS OF MISS CH'EN'S POLITICAL ASSOCIATES AND THE REPORTING OF THE PRESS AND SHALL KEEP THE DEPARTMENT INFORMED.
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